



(19)

(11) Publication number: **2001038303**

Generated Document.

**PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN**(21) Application number: **11217153**(51) Intl. Cl.: **B07C 3/14 G06K 9/20**(22) Application date: **30.07.99**

(30) Priority:

(43) Date of application  
publication: **13.02.01**(84) Designated contracting  
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(57) Abstract:

**PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED:** To remarkably reduce a cost without degrading the performance of the apparatus by detecting the information on the four corners of cellophane windows from the images read from a medium and the information on the lines in the horizontal and perpendicular directions of the cellophane windows by filter processing to detect cellophane window regions and reading addresses.

**SOLUTION:** An image input section 1 optically reads and scans the surface of envelopes as postal items P transported on a transporting path 9, detects the respective lines constituting the addresses within the address regions, segments the respective lines to character patterns of one line each in accordance with the bit map data of each of the respective lines and recognizes character candidates. A region

detecting section moves the matrix data of a memory by one pixel-component with various kinds of detecting filters of a detecting filter memory section and makes multiplication, thereby executing the filter processing over the entire surface and determining peak values. The candidates of the positions at the four corners of the cellophane windows Pa, the positions at the edges in the horizontal direction and the positions at the edges in the perpendicular direction are detected by the peak values. The region candidates of the cellophane windows Pa are detected and the cellophane window Pa regions are selected.

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